

**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Child Care Bureau

Funding Opportunity Title: Child Care Bureau Research Scholars

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2006-ACF-ACYF-YE-0010

CFDA Number: 93.647

Due Date For Letter of Intent: 04/26/2006

Due Date for Applications: 05/23/2006

Executive Summary:

The Administration for Children and Families' (ACF), Administration on Children, Youth and Families' (ACYF), Child Care Bureau (CCB or the Bureau) announces the availability of funds to support new CCB Research Scholars projects in Fiscal Year 2006. The Research Scholars grants are designed to increase the number of doctoral-level graduate students conducting dissertation research on child care policy issues consistent with the Bureau's research goals.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Legislative Authority

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 1990, as amended, 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 74; section 418 of the Social Security Act; Appropriations Act 2006 (Public Law (P.L.) 109-149).

The Administration for Children and Families' (ACF), Administration on Children Youth and Families' (ACYF), Child Care Bureau (CCB or the Bureau) announces the availability of funds to support new CCB Research Scholar projects in Fiscal Year (FY) 2006. The Research Scholar grants are designed to increase the number of doctoral-level graduate students conducting dissertation research on child care policy issues consistent with the Bureau's research goals.

A. Child Care Bureau

Since its establishment in 1995, CCB has been dedicated to enhancing the quality, affordability, and supply of child care available for all low-income families (for more information about the Bureau, please visit our website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/>). CCB administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), a \$4.8 billion child care program that includes funding for child care subsidies and activities to improve the availability of quality child care. CCDF was created after amendments to ACF child care programs by Title VI of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 consolidated four Federal child care funding streams, including the CCDBG, Aid to Families with Dependent Children/Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (AFDC/JOBS) Child Care, Transitional Child Care, and At-Risk Child Care. The entitlement portion consisted of mandatory and matching funds made available under section 418 of the Social Security Act, while the discretionary funding was authorized by the CCDBG Act. The combined funding from these streams was designated the CCDF. With related

State and Federal funding, CCDF provides annual funds to States, Territories, and Tribes, in combination with related State and Federal child care funding, to help low-income, working families access child care.

The Bureau works closely with States, Territories, Tribes, and ACF regions to facilitate, oversee, and document the implementation of new policies and programs that support State, local, and private sector administration of child care services and systems. In addition, the Bureau collaborates extensively with other offices throughout the Federal Government to promote integrated approaches, family-focused services, and coordinated child care delivery systems. In all of these activities, the Bureau strives to support the healthy growth and development of children in safe child care environments, promote children's early learning and school readiness, enhance parental choice and involvement in their children's care, and facilitate the linkage of child care with other community services.

B. Child Care Bureau's Research Goals

Since 2000, Congress has appropriated about \$10 million per year of CCDF discretionary funds to be used for child care research and evaluation. CCB has used these funds to support projects that will add to our knowledge about the efficacy of child care policies and programs in supporting employment and self-sufficiency outcomes for parents, and providing positive learning and school readiness outcomes for children. The Bureau's FY 2006 child care research goals will continue to support activities that generate knowledge about child care services and programs and inform policy decisions and solutions, particularly for minority and underserved populations. We intend to support projects that improve our capacity to respond to questions of immediate concern to policymakers, particularly those of State child care administrators.

CCB's capacity to further child care-related research and data is enhanced by the Child Care Policy Consortium, which is an alliance of research projects sponsored by CCB. The Consortium is comprised of researchers who have partnered with policy organizations, States, and local communities to link research, policy, and practice. The research projects of consortium members cover a wide array of topics. For example, some projects describe State and local child care populations, services, and programs, while others focus on child care subsidy policies and market dynamics. In addition, some projects examine issues surrounding professional development and training approaches for child care providers.

In order to synthesize the broad array of child care information generated, CCB created the Child Care and Early Education Research Connections (*Research Connections*) to serve as a national research knowledge management system for the child care and early education fields. *Research Connections* consists of an interactive website (<http://childcareresearch.org>), an archive of data sets and reports, and a technical assistance support system to assist researchers and facilitate collaboration.

C. Purpose and Goals of the CCB Research Scholar Program

The purpose of this program is to help develop a national infrastructure for high-quality child care policy research by increasing the number of upcoming researchers investigating child care issues consistent with the Bureau's research goals.

The specific goals of the Child Care Research Scholar Grants are:

- 1. To directly support students' graduate training and professional development as researchers engaged in child care policy-relevant research.** Students are expected to become autonomous researchers who are connected to other professionals from diverse backgrounds across a variety of child care roles (e.g., State child care administrators, child care resource and referral staff, child care program directors and staff). The proposed research project may include independent studies conducted by the student or a well-defined portion of a larger study being conducted by the Principal Investigator holding a faculty position or senior research position. The graduate student must have primary responsibility for the proposed study described in the application, which should clearly distinguish between the student's portion of the research activities and those of the larger project. Research projects must use sound quantitative or qualitative research methodologies or some combination of the two.
- 2. To foster formal mentoring relationships between faculty members and graduate students who are pursuing doctoral-level research in the child care field.** Each student will work in partnership with a faculty mentor in order to foster the skills necessary to build a graduate student's career trajectory. Within this nurturing and supportive mentoring relationship, scholars are expected to become independent researchers with the skills necessary to address critical child care issues with a high level of technical quality.
- 3. To encourage active communication, networking, and collaboration among graduate students, their mentors, and other prominent child care researchers.** Students whose work involves secondary analysis of large data sets are encouraged to work closely with one or more senior investigators on the original project.

4. To encourage active communication, networking, and collaboration among graduate students, their mentors, and policymakers. Students whose projects involve community-level or administrative data research, including projects that directly respond to an immediate concern of a State child care administrator, are encouraged to work with an additional mentor from the field in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of child care policies and practices.

CCB is interested in research proposals in the following areas:

1. What is the impact of State- and local-level child care subsidy and administrative policies on low-income parent's ability to obtain non-parental child care for their children in order to secure and maintain employment?
2. How do eligibility, co-payment, and reimbursement rate-setting policies and practices at the State and local levels impact access and affordability to a range of child care settings that meet the needs of low-income, working families?
3. What are the effects of incentives and other initiatives on increasing the supply of child care for special populations (e.g., language, ethnic and racial minorities, children with special needs, and infants and toddlers)?
4. What are cost-effective strategies (e.g., professional development interventions, child care environment improvement strategies) to improve child care quality, which support children's healthy development and family well-being?

Applicants must address at least one of these four research questions. In addition, we encourage applicants to consider how the above questions relate to improving child care programs and policies for underserved populations.

We strongly encourage applicants to work with a State child care administrator and select a research question of immediate interest to him/her (for State child care program office contact list, please visit <http://nccic.org/statedata/dirs/devfund.html>).

Because of the small size of these grants and their value to institutions of higher education, as well as to the student scholars, applicants are strongly encouraged to waive any allowable indirect costs.

In order to facilitate networking with researchers and policymakers, students are required to participate in CCB's Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium and the State Child Care Administrators' Meeting.

In accordance with section 4 of Executive Order Number 13230 entitled "Educational Excellence for Hispanic American Commission," grantees should provide data resulting from this project if so requested by the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (3 C.F.R. 13230).

D. Definitions

Applicant: Institutions of higher education, as defined in *Section III.1*, acting on behalf of doctoral-level graduate students.

Budget Period: The 12-month period of time for which funds are made available to a particular grantee (i.e., the first budget period would begin September 30, 2006, and end September 29, 2007).

Principal Investigator: The faculty mentor of the doctoral-level graduate student serves as the Principal Investigator of the grant.

Project Period: The total length of the proposed project, which is up to 24 months. For a one-year proposed project, the project period would start September 30, 2006, and end September 29, 2007. For a two-year proposed project, the project period would start September 30, 2006, and end September 29, 2008.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$120,000
Anticipated Number of Awards:	4 to 6
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards:	\$30,000 per budget period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$30,000 per budget period
Length of Project Periods:	24-month project with two 12-month budget periods

This announcement invites applications for project periods up to 24 months with two 12-month budget periods. Applicants proposing 24-month project periods will be awarded up to \$30,000 for the first 12-month budget period and up to \$20,000 for the second 12-month budget period, for a total not exceeding \$50,000 for the entire 24-month project period. Initial grant awards will be made for a 12-month budget period. For 24-month projects, the award of continuation grants for the second 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress by the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government. **The need for a 24-month project period should be identified in Item 13 on the Standard Form (SF) 424, in the project narrative, and in the budget.** Applicants proposing 24-month projects will receive instructions on how to submit non-competing continuation applications during the first budget period to request funds for the second budget period.

If the student expects to receive a doctorate by the end of the first 12-month budget period, the application should request funding for only a 12-month project period. Second year awards for continuation of the project will not be approved if the student has completed his/her dissertation by the end of the first budget period.

Awards under this announcement are subject to the availability of funds.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants:

- Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education

Eligible applicants include:

(a) Faith-based institutions of higher education are eligible to apply *on behalf of doctoral-level graduate students*;

(b) Tribally Controlled Land Grant Colleges and Universities (TCUs) as cited in Section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 United States Code (U.S.C.) -- 301 note), any other institutions that qualify for funding under the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, (25 U.S.C. -- 1801 et seq.), and Navajo Community College, authorized in the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978, Public

Law (P.L.) 95-471, Title II (25 U.S.C. -- 640a note). TCUs that are not accredited are not eligible to apply under this announcement; and

(c) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as defined in the amended version of the Higher Education Act of 1965, codified at 20 U.S.C. -- 1061(2), and that are institutions established prior to 1964 whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and must satisfy Section 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Institutions that meet the definition of "Part B institution" in Section 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. -- 1061(2), shall be eligible for assistance under this announcement.

(d) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) as defined in the amended version of the Higher Education Act of 1965, codified at 20 U.S.C. -- 1101(a), and that are institutions who satisfy Section 502(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Institutions that meet the definition of "Hispanic Serving Institution" in Section 502(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. -- 1101, shall be eligible for assistance under this announcement.

To be eligible to administer the grant on behalf of the student, the institution must be fully accredited by one the regional accrediting commissions recognized by the Department of Education and the Council of Post-Secondary Accreditation.

Please see *Section IV* for required documentation supporting eligibility or funding restrictions if any are applicable.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: None

3. Other:

1. Although the faculty mentor is listed as the Principal Investigator and must be committed to taking a central role in supporting the proposed dissertation research, this grant is intended for dissertation research for an individual student. Contact information for both the graduate student and the student's faculty mentor is required as part of the application and should be included in the **Appendix**.
2. As Principal Investigator, the graduate student's faculty mentor must submit a letter stating that he/she approves the application and describing how he/she will regularly monitor the student's work. In addition, the letter must verify (a) the student's status in the doctoral program, (b) that the grant will be used to fund the student's dissertation research and (c) that the student is within two years or less of completing his/her dissertation. This letter should be included in the **Appendix**.
3. The student must include an official transcript reflecting his/her completed graduate course work in the **Appendix**.
4. As the author of the grant proposal, the graduate student is expected to have an approved dissertation proposal before the beginning of the project period, September 30, 2006.

D-U-N-S Requirement

All applicants must have a D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published in the *Federal Register* a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires Federal grant applicants to provide a D-U-N-S number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The D-U-N-S number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal, Grants.gov. A D-U-N-S number will be required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a D-U-N-S number. You may acquire a D-U-N-S number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free D-U-N-S number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Disqualification Factors

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.3* will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package:

ACYF Operations Center
c/o The Dixon Group
Attn: Child Care Bureau Research Scholars Funding
118 Q Street, NE.
Washington, DC 20002-2132
Phone: 866-796-1591
Email: ccb@dixongroup.com

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Letters of Intent

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify the ACYF Operations Center (ccb@dixongroup.com) of their intention to submit an application under this announcement. Please submit the letter of intent by the deadline date listed in *Section IV.3*.

The letter of intent should include the following information: the number and title of this announcement, the names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, email and addresses for the Principal Investigator (faculty mentor), the graduate student, and the name of the university, non-profit institution of higher education, or other eligible applicant. **Do not include a description of your proposed project.**

Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. Failure to submit a letter of intent will not impact eligibility to submit an application and will not disqualify an application from competitive review.

Format and Organization

The original and two copies of your application must be submitted. Applicants must limit their application to 100 pages, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins and 12-point fonts. This page limit applies to both narrative text and supporting materials, not including the Standard Federal Forms (listed below). In addition, applicants must number the pages of their application beginning with the Table of Contents. Pages in excess of the page limitation will be removed and not reviewed.

Applicants are advised to include all required forms and materials and to organize these materials according to the format, and in the order, presented below:

1. **Cover Letter.** Applicants should include a Cover Letter including the program announcement number and contact information for the applicant.
2. Required **Standard Federal Forms and Certifications** signed by the applicant's authorizing official to acknowledge responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award.

3. **Table of Contents**
4. **Project Abstract** (one page maximum)
5. **Project Description** (see details below)
6. **Budget Narrative/Justification.** Because of the small size of these grants and their value to institutions of higher education, as well as to the student scholars, applicants are strongly encouraged to waive any allowable indirect costs. In order to facilitate networking with researchers and policymakers, students are required to include in the budget attendance of CCB's Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium and the State Child Care Administrators' Meeting held annually in the Washington, DC metropolitan area (see details below).
7. **Appendices**
 - Complete Contact Information for Student and Faculty Advisor (see details below)
 - Letter of Support from Advisor (see details below)
 - Letter of Support from State Child Care Administrator (if applicable, see details below)
 - Curriculum Vitae for Student and Faculty Advisor
 - Official Transcript of Student Reflecting Graduate Courses

Contact Information Sheet. The contact information sheet should have complete contact information, including addresses, phone and fax numbers and email addresses for the graduate student, the Principal Investigator (faculty advisor) and the institution's grants/financial officer (person who signs the SF-424).

Letter of Support from Advisor. The letter of support from an advisor should state that he/she approves the application and describe how he/she will regularly monitor the student's work. In addition, the letter must verify (a) the student's status in the doctoral program, (b) the grant will be used to fund the student's dissertation research and (c) the student is within two years or less of completing his/her dissertation.

Letter of Support from State Child Care Administrator (if applicable). For projects addressing an immediate State child care policy question, applicants should include a letter from the State child care administrator indicating they will support the applicant in accessing any relevant data, programs, or populations in order to carry out the project activities. The letter should also include a statement from the administrator indicating why they are interested in supporting this project and how it addresses a child care policy question of immediate concern.

Project Description. The project description should be carefully developed in accordance with the research goals as described in the Purpose, Background and Priorities sections of this funding opportunity, and the structure requirements listed in *Section V*. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the detailed *Evaluation Criteria* found in *Section V* to organize the project summary/abstract and full project description.**

Forms and Certifications

The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in this program announcement under *Section V*. Application Review Information. In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all of the Standard Forms required as part of the application process for awards under this announcement.

Applicants seeking financial assistance under this announcement must file the appropriate Standard Forms as described in this section. All applicants must submit SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. For non-construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424A, Budget Information and SF-424B, Assurances. For construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424C, Budget Information and SF-424D, Assurances. The forms may be reproduced for use in submitting applications. Applicants must sign and return the standard forms with their application.

Applicants must furnish prior to award an executed copy of the SF-LLL, Certification Regarding Lobbying, when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form, if applicable, with their application. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must also understand that they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within Public Law (P.L.) 103-227, Title XII Environmental Tobacco Smoke (also known as the PRO-KIDS Act of 1994). A copy of the *Federal Register* notice that implements the smoking prohibition is included with this form. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it. Complete the standard forms and the associated certifications and assurances based on the instructions on the forms. The forms and certifications may be found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

NOTE: All standard forms and certifications must be signed by the authorizing official for the institution of higher education (the applicant, as defined in *Section III*).

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424). Follow the instructions on the back of the form. In Item 5 on SF-424, enter the name of the applicant (Institution of Higher Education, acting on behalf of doctoral-level graduate student). In Item 8 on SF-424, check "New". **SF-424 must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant** (e.g., authorized representative of office of sponsored research at the institution of higher education).
- Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- Assurance Regarding Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying
- Disclosures of Lobbying Activities (if necessary)
- Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke
- Assurance Regarding Protection of Human Subjects

Please see *Section V.1* for instructions on preparing the full project description.

Please reference *Section IV.3* for details about acknowledgement of received applications.

Electronic Submission

You may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format. To submit an application electronically, please use the <http://www.Grants.gov> site.

If you use Grants.gov, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. ACF will not accept grant applications via facsimile or email.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before you submit an electronic application, you must complete the organization registration process as well as obtain and register "electronic signature credentials" for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Since this process may take more than five business days, it is important to start this process early, well in

advance of the application deadline. **Be sure to complete all Grants.gov registration processes listed on the Organization Registration Checklist, which can be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/registration_checklist.html.**

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov:

- Electronic submission is voluntary, but strongly encouraged.
- You may access the electronic application for this program at <http://www.Grants.gov>. There you can search for the downloadable application package by utilizing the Grants.gov FIND function.
- **We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.** We encourage applicants that submit electronically to submit well before the closing date and time so that if difficulties are encountered an applicant can still submit a hard copy via express mail.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. **REMINDER: CCR registration expires each year and thus must be updated annually. You cannot upload an application to Grants.gov without having a current CCR registration AND electronic signature credentials for the AOR.**
- The electronic application is submitted by the AOR. To submit electronically, the AOR must obtain and register electronic signature credentials approved by the organization's E-Business Point of Contact who maintains the organization's CCR registration.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF-424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your application must comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. ACF will retrieve your application from Grants.gov.
- ACF may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in hard copy.
- If you encounter difficulties in using Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov to report the problem and obtain assistance.
- Checklists and registration brochures are maintained at <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted> to assist you in the registration process.
- When submitting electronically via Grants.gov, applicants must comply with all due dates **AND** times referenced in *Section IV.3*.

Hard Copy Submission

Applicants that are submitting their application in paper format should submit one original and two copies of the complete application. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures, and be unbound.

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-Federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information.

If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Due Date For Letter of Intent: 04/26/2006

Due Date for Applications: 05/23/2006

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is referenced above. Applications received after 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date will be classified as late and will not be considered in the current competition.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that applications are mailed or hand-delivered or submitted electronically well in advance of the application due date and time.

Mail

Applications that are submitted by mail must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above at the address listed in *Section IV.6*.

Hand Delivery

Applications hand carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representatives of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers must be received on or before the due date referenced above, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., eastern time, at the address referenced in *Section IV.6*, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

Electronic Submission

Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by facsimile or email.

Late Applications

Applications that do not meet the requirements above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

ANY APPLICATION RECEIVED AFTER 4:30 P.M., EASTERN TIME, ON THE DUE DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPETITION.

Extension of Deadlines

ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur; when there are widespread disruptions of mail service; or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

Receipt acknowledgement for application packages will be provided to applicants who submit their package via mail, courier services, or by hand delivery. Applicants will receive an electronic acknowledgement for applications that are submitted via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Checklist

You may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Required Content	Required Form or Format	When to Submit
Letter of Intent	See Section IV.2	Found in Section IV.2	30 days prior to application due date.
Project Abstract	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Project Description	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Budget Narrative/Justification	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Table of Contents	See Section	Found in Section IV.2	By application

	IV.2		due date.
Complete Contact Information for Student and Faculty Advisor.	See Section IV.2	Found in Section III.3 and IV.2	By application due date.
Letter of Support from Advisor	See Sections III.3 and IV.2	Found in Section III.3 and IV.2	By application due date.
Curriculum Vitae for Student and Faculty Advisor	See Sections III.3 and IV.2	Found in Section III.3 and IV.2	By application due date.
Official Student Transcript Reflecting Graduate Courses	See Sections III.3 and IV.2	Found in Section III.3 and IV.2	By application due date.
SF-424	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
SF-424A	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
SF-424B	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
SF-LLL Certification Regarding Lobbying	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
Assurances	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.

4. Intergovernmental Review:

State Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

This program is covered under Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

As of August 1, 2005, the following jurisdictions have elected to participate in the EO process: Arkansas, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. As these jurisdictions have elected to participate in the Executive Order process, they have established SPOCs. Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of prospective applications and receive instructions. Applicants must submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards. SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations, which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 4th floor, Washington, DC 20447.

Although the remaining jurisdictions have chosen not to participate in the process, entities that meet the eligibility requirements of the program are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a SPOC. Therefore, applicants from these jurisdictions, or for projects administered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes, need take no action in regard to EO 12372.

The official list, including addresses, of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in EO 12372 can be found on the following URL:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

5. Funding Restrictions:

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction and purchase of real property are not allowable activities or expenditures under this grant award.

Applicants that do not address at least one of the four research questions of interest to the Child Care Bureau will not be funded (see *Section I.C*).

No individual educational institution will be funded for more than one candidate unless applications from different universities or colleges do not qualify for support.

Transferability: Grants awarded as a result of this competition are not transferable to another student or to another institution.

Sharing of Awards. Awards cannot be divided among two or more students.

Only expenses directly related to the student's dissertation research, including required personnel costs, travel and other directly related expenses, are allowable under this grant.

In order to facilitate networking with researchers and policymakers, students are required to budget attendance in CCB's Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium and the State Child Care Administrators' Meeting, each held annually in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

6. Other Submission Requirements:

Please see *Sections IV.2* and *IV.3* for deadline information and other application requirements.

Submit applications to one of the following addresses:

Submission by Mail

ACYF Operations Center
c/o The Dixon Group
Attn: Child Care Research Scholars Funding
118 Q Street, NE.
Washington, DC 20002

Hand Delivery

ACYF Operations Center
c/o The Dixon Group
Attn: Child Care Research Scholars Funding
118 Q Street, NE.
Washington, DC 20002

Electronic Submission

Please see *Section IV.2* for guidelines and requirements when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

The project description is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 4/30/2007.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

1. Criteria:

Part I THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference.

Part II GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

Provide a summary of the project description (one page or less) with reference to the funding request.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED

Identify the results and benefits to be derived.

For example, explain how your proposed project will achieve the specific goals and objectives you have identified. Or, explain how the expected results will benefit policymakers. How will the results help particular populations? How will the results inform future program and policy decisions?

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the OMB. This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following are requests for additional information that must be included in the application:

STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Provide a biographical sketch and job description for each key person appointed. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff is appointed, biographical sketches will also be required.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide a budget with line-item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information Form (SF-424A or SF-424C). Detailed

calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching is a requirement, include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

PERSONNEL

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

TRAVEL

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. Travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

SUPPLIES

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

OTHER

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs; space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion; however, applicants need not develop their applications precisely according to the order presented. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

APPROACH - 40 points

The extent to which the proposed project clearly addresses at least one of the four specific research questions of interest to the Child Care Bureau (see *Section I.C*). **Applicants who fail to adequately address at least one of these questions will receive a score of zero for this criterion.**

The extent to which there is a discrete research project designed by the graduate student. If the proposed project is part of a larger study designed by others, the application will be evaluated to the extent that the approach section clearly delineates the research component to be carried out by the student and how it is distinguished from the larger research project.

The extent to which the proposal effectively articulates the current state of knowledge on: (a) the interplay among child care and other social, economic or early care and education programs, (b) child care and children's development and well-being, or (c) child care and family self-sufficiency.

The extent to which the proposed research design: (a) appropriately links research issues, questions, variables, data sources, samples, and analyses and (b) employs technically sound and appropriate approaches, design elements and procedures and sampling techniques.

The extent to which the proposed design: (a) reflects sensitivity to technical, logistical, and ethical issues that may arise, (b) adequate protection of human subjects, confidentiality of data and consent procedures, as appropriate, and (c) demonstrates how the researcher will gain access to the necessary organizations, participants and data sources needed for the project.

The extent to which the research design: (a) specifies the measures to be used and their psychometric properties, (b) describes how these measures have been used to address the proposed research questions, and (c) describes how these measures have been used with the population to be studied.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 30 points

The extent to which the proposal reflects a solid understanding of: (a) critical issues, information needs, and research issues of the child care field, including state child care administrators and other policymakers, (b) the child care subsidy system, and (c) low-income working families from various cultural, linguistic and ethnic groups.

The extent to which the conceptual model, research questions, and hypotheses are: (a) clearly defined and appropriately linked, (b) reflect the Child Care Bureau's research goals, and (c) will contribute new knowledge to the field.

The extent to which the researcher specifies: (a) a sound description of the anticipated results and benefits of the project and (b) how the results will benefit future program and policy decisions.

STAFF AND POSITION DATA - 20 points

The extent to which the student and his/her mentor: (a) demonstrate competence in the areas addressed by the proposed research, including relevant background, experience, and training on related research or similar projects, (b) demonstrate expertise in research design, sampling, field work, and data processing statistical analysis, (c) reflect an understanding of the child care subsidy system and the child care needs of low-income families and the diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic population it serves, and (d) include an effective plan for the dissemination and utilization of information by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field.

The extent to which the application includes a management plan that presents a sound framework for how the mentor and student will maintain quality control over the implementation and ongoing operations for the study.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

The extent to which the proposed project costs: (a) are reasonable, appropriately allocated, and sufficient to accomplish the objectives, research, design, and dissemination plan, (b) include funds for the student, and his/her mentor, if applicable, to participate in the CCB's Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium and the State Administrators' Meeting in Washington, DC, and, (c) are justified according to the needs and time frame for carrying out the proposed project.

2. Review and Selection Process:

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application.

Application Process. Detailed instructions for preparing and submitting applications are described in *Section IV.2* and *Section V*.

Application, Review, Selection, and Award: Each application will be screened to determine if they were received on time and within the stated ceiling amount. Applications not screened out will be evaluated on a competitive basis according to the specified evaluation criteria listed in *Section V.1*.

The competitive review will be conducted in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Expert reviewers may include researchers, Federal or State staff, child care administrators, or other individuals experienced in child care research and evaluation. A panel of at least three reviewers will evaluate each application to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal in terms of its fit with the Bureau's research goals and the evaluation criteria.

Panelists will provide written comments and assign numerical scores for each application. The assigned scores for each criterion will be summed and averaged to yield a total evaluation score for the proposal. In addition to the panel review,

CCB may solicit comments from other Federal offices and agencies, States, non-governmental organizations and individuals whose particular expertise is identified as necessary for the consideration of technical issues arising during the review. The Bureau will consider their comments, along with those of the panelists, when making funding decisions. The Bureau will also take into account the best combination of proposed projects to meet its overall research goals.

The ACYF Commissioner will make the final selection of the applicants to be funded. Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on: (1) The rank order of applicants resulting from the competitive review, (2) staff review and consultations, (3) the combination of projects that best meets the Bureau's research goals, (4) the funds available; and (5) other relevant considerations.

Please reference *Section IV.2* for information on non-Federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications that are approved but unfunded may be held over for funding in the next funding cycle, pending the availability of funds, for a period not to exceed one year.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices:

The successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award document, which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Financial Assistance Award will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified in writing.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grantees are subject to the requirements in 45 CFR Part 74 (non-governmental) or 45 CFR Part 92 (governmental).

Direct Federal grants, sub-award funds, or contracts under this ACF program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the services funded under this program. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at the HHS web site at: <http://www.os.dhhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>.

Faith-based and community organizations may reference the "Guidance to Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government" at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/guidance/index.html>.

Special Terms and Conditions of Awards:

The following special term(s) and condition(s) are in addition to the ACF standard terms and conditions which accompany the Financial Assistance Award (FAA) document.

Conference Attendance. The student must attend and present a poster at the Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium each year of the grant. This conference is typically scheduled during the spring of each year. In addition, the student may be asked to attend the State Administrators' Meeting typically held in the summer of each year. Both meetings typically are held in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and last approximately two days. The budget should reflect travel funds for both conferences. Faculty advisors are strongly encouraged to attend these conferences as well.

Archiving and Publishing. The student must agree to archive his/her approved dissertation document with *Research Connections*. The student must also work with CCB staff and *Research Connections* staff to publish a research/policy brief that can be published on the *Research Connections* website. For more information on *Research Connections*, please visit <http://childcareresearch.org>.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Grantees will be required to submit program progress and financial reports (SF-269 found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>) throughout the project period. Program progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

Program Progress Reports: Semi-Annually

Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Program Office Contact:

Dr. Dawn Ramsburg
Administration for Children and Families
Child Care Bureau
Portals Building, 8th Floor, #8324
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: 202-690-6705
Fax: 202-690-5600
Email: dramsburg@acf.hhs.gov

Grants Management Office Contact:

Peter Thompson
Grants Officer
Office of Grants Management
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW.
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-4608

Fax: 202-205-8267

Email: pthompson@acf.hhs.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Date: 03/22/2006

Joan E. Ohl

Commissioner

Administration for Children, Youth and Families